

**St. Bernadette**  
USA

**Reliquary of Saint Bernadette**

**U.S Tour 2022 –**

**April 4<sup>th</sup> – August 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Practical information guide**

Reliquary of Saint Bernadette Soubirous



By Maison Granda, Spain



## *The Relics*

On **18<sup>th</sup> April 1925**, forty-six years after her death, the body of Bernadette SOUBIROUS was exhumed so that relics could be retrieved.

This mission was entrusted to Doctors COMTE and TALON. Doctor COMTE took the first samples from the body which “was of a soft and almost normal consistency”, he wrote in 1928 in the Bulletin of the Medical Association at Our Lady of Lourdes.

On 14<sup>th</sup> June 1925, Pius XI proclaimed Bernadette SOUBIROUS “Blessed”. Her body was then transferred to its current shrine in Nevers on **18<sup>th</sup> July 1925**.

On **8<sup>th</sup> December 1933**, Pope Pius XI canonised Saint Bernadette, and her feast day is celebrated on **16<sup>th</sup> April** in the United State.

The “Original Acts”, preserved in the Archives of Nevers and written in Latin, indicate that taken for the relics were:

- A fragment of the 5<sup>th</sup> rib
- A fragment of the 6<sup>th</sup> rib
- The kneecaps
- A sample of muscle, from the external part of the right femur
- Lots of hair
- And various fragments which came from muscles and skin

The conservation and attribution of these relics were entrusted to the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Nevers, under the vigilance of the Bishop of Nevers.

These relics were given, in the form of *ex-carne* or *ex-ossibus* fragments, by the Sisters of Nevers, to various houses of their Congregation.

The relic in the reliquary, which is travelling through France and abroad, is an *ex-carne* relic, given to the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception (Fathers of Garaison), founded in 1836. A From 1866, it was this congregation which managed the Sanctuary of Lourdes, at the request of Mgr. Laurence, Bishop of Tarbes.

In 2018, the Very Reverend Father Horacio BRITO, Superior General of the Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception entrusted this relic to the Sanctuary of Lourdes. It is now in the reliquary made in Spain by the Maison Granda workshop. This reliquary was solemnly unveiled in Lourdes on **30<sup>th</sup> May 2019**.

## *Technical information*

### The Reliquary

#### **Reliquary dimensions**

Width: 44,5cm  
Length: 44,5cm  
Height: 98cm  
Weight: 60kg

#### **Reliquary flight case**

Length: 58cm  
Width: 58cm  
Height: 126cm  
Weight: 23kg



### The Statue of Our Lady of Lourdes

#### **Dimensions of the statue**

Length: 46cm  
Width: 42cm  
Height: 145cm  
Weight: 9.8kg

#### **Statue flight case**

Length: 57cm  
Width: 155cm  
Height: 48cm  
Weight: 24kg



## The Stretcher

### Dimensions

Width: 80cm  
Length: 221 cm  
Height: 20 cm  
Weight: 23kg



## 2 Rolls ups figuring St Bernadette and Our Lady of Lourdes

### Dimensions (open)

Height :200 cm  
Length: 90 cm x  
Width: 15 cm

### Dimension in travel bag

Length: 90 cm  
Width: 15 cm



## **LOURDES WATER**

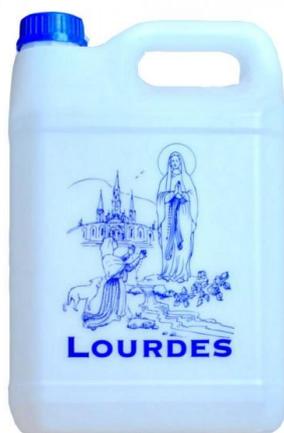
containers of 10 litres

Dimensions

Length: 19 cm

Width: 20 cm

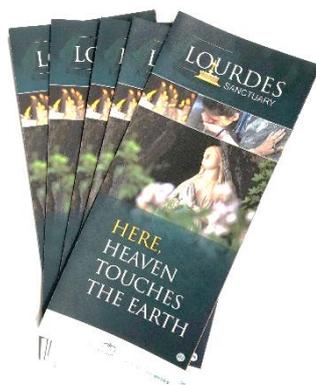
Height: 35 cm



## **FLYER of the Sanctuary of Lourdes**

Width: 9 cm

Height: 21 cm



## **Devotional image of Our Lady of Lourdes**

Width: 9 cm

Height: 13 cm



*Example of exposition of the Relics in a church*



## *What to do before the visit of the Relics.*

### **1. Official request of the Relics of St Bernadette**

Any request for the loan of the reliquary must come from the local bishop. The Sanctuary of Lourdes responds according to the requests it receives and according to a schedule that it sets up.

### **2. Designation of a responsible person**

The local bishop should indicate to the Sanctuary who is responsible for the organization and management of the pilgrimage. This person is the one with whom the Sanctuary will prepare the pilgrimage.

### **3. General Agreement**

Once the destination has been confirmed, the Sanctuary will send an agreement for the provision of the reliquary. It should be signed by the person responsible and countersigned by the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes.

### **4. Program creation**

The programme for the reliquary's excursion should be decided in advance, and the Sanctuary can assist in its development. Once established, the programme must be sent to the Sanctuary for validation. For reasons of insurance and liability, full details of the places of celebration, transfers from one place to another, the timetable, and means of transport used must be included.

In addition to the material preparation of the programme, special attention should be paid to its spiritual preparation. The Sanctuary has many documents available to help the organizer. (See What to do during the visit.)

### **5. Communication tools and requirements**

The Sanctuary of Lourdes provides a communication guide and tools to prepare for an organized, efficient, and spiritually rewarding visit.

As tools, the Sanctuary provides press release, photos, video, logos, etc... They will be downloaded on [www.stbernadetteusa.org](http://www.stbernadetteusa.org)

The Sanctuary of Lourdes requires advertising the event to ensure as many of the faithful as possible can interact with the relics of St Bernadette:

- All hosting dioceses should advertise the visit of the relics, minimally in diocesan publications but also via email communications and social media, to the both the clergy and lay faithful of the diocese.
- Use logos of the Sanctuary of Lourdes and logos of the partners of the Sanctuary (The Hospitality of Miami, The Hospitality Our Lady of Lourdes – North American Volunteers, and the Sovereign Order of Malta) in your communications.
- Use the official logo of the visit of the relics in your communication.
- Provide short description and history of the Apparitions in Lourdes and of the Sanctuary of Lourdes in your communications and minimally on your diocese or parish website.
- Mention copyright when using a picture provided by Sanctuary of Lourdes: ©, [Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes, Pierre Vincent](http://www.stbernadetteusa.org), do not reproduce without written authorization, do not use for commercial purpose.

- Each hosting diocese website should contain a link to the official website of the Sanctuary Our Lady of Lourdes [www.lourdes-france.org/en](http://www.lourdes-france.org/en) and to the official website of the U.S tour: [www.stbernadetteusa.org](http://www.stbernadetteusa.org)

## **6. Transport and custody of the Reliquary**

The transport of the Reliquary and other items are entrusted to the transport company Clover Group (<https://clover.group/>)

The Reliquary will travel by air from Lourdes (FR) to the USA where it will be transferred to a dedicated van. The Reliquary will be equipped with a GPS, thus enabling people to follow the journey throughout the Tour. The van will also be identifiable on the road by its logos.

## **7. Insurance**

Throughout the pilgrimage, the reliquary is provided by the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes. The Sanctuary of Lourdes has contracted a specific insurance for the pilgrimage.

Each hosting diocese or Parish must send to the Sanctuary the planned programme and the places where the relics will stay.

In the event of the disappearance of or damage to the reliquary in an unplanned or unspecified location, the insurance will be invalidated, and any costs incurred will be charged to the diocese that is hosting the reliquary.

Consequently, the reliquary cannot be taken to places other than those scheduled in the agreement with the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes.

## **8. Expenditure in relation to the Relics**

Insurance costs for the Reliquary will be covered by the Sanctuary of Lourdes. All other costs will be met by the hosting diocese: transport, accommodation for the driver, communication, ...

The total cost of the transport of the Reliquary and the other items (statue OLOL, water, stretcher, ...) is divided by the number of dioceses receiving the relics. This is estimated between \$US 2,400 and 2,800.

Each diocese is free to organize good will collections or fundraisers to help them cover the cost.

## *What to do during the visit of the Relics*

### 1. The visit of the relics

It is up to the applicant to organize the pastoral programme for the duration of the visit of Saint Bernadette's relics.

#### **To facilitate this, the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes provide:**

- Pictures / prayers of the Virgin Mary and of Saint Bernadette
- A presentation of the message of Lourdes
- Leaflets from the Sanctuary of Lourdes
- A practical information guide (this document)
- A liturgy and celebrations guide:
  - o with the ritual and lectionary for the 2 masses: Saint Bernadette and Our Lady of Lourdes,
  - o with the Marian Torchlight Procession
  - o with the ritual for the Water Gesture
  - o with the novena to Our Lady of Lourdes
  - o With examples for a 3-days programme for the visit of the Relics
- A Communication guide and tools

Material can be download on the website of the tour: [www.stbernadetteusa.org](http://www.stbernadetteusa.org)

#### **Example of programme**

The Sanctuary of Lourdes and their American partners are happy to assist with and offer resources to enhance the Diocesan Program for the Relic Tour of St Bernadette, to include

- **Possible guest speakers**
- **Possible volunteers** to assist with the logistic, celebrations, etc.
- **Official video “Story of the Marian Apparitions in Lourdes”**
- **Video about the healing and miracles in Lourdes**
- **A Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience™**: A prayerful, interactive pilgrimage experience offered by an in-person guide to include projected images, touching pieces of the grotto rock, Lourdes Water, sharing the story of the apparitions, the message of Lourdes and more. A plenary indulgence is granted for this experience, under the usual conditions. This can be especially tailored to school children, adults, as well as other specialized communities such as nursing home residents and prisoners. ***Available in English and Spanish***
- **Catechetical Resources for School-age Children**
- **Video testimony of pilgrims**: *My Lourdes Faith Journey* series, 9 previously aired episodes on EWTN.
- **Information** for making pilgrimage to Lourdes or serving the sick in Lourdes

### 2. Veneration of the reliquary

The veneration of the relics is by exposition. It is recommended that, as in Lourdes, any processions are made with the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes and that the reliquary is left exposed inside the church. Any processions with the reliquary must be clearly indicated as such in the programme sent to the Sanctuary.

### **3. LOURDES Water**

It is recommended to use the Lourdes water to sprinkle the faithful due to the limited amount provided.

### **4. Security**

During the veneration of the faithful, it is essential to leave someone guarding the reliquary and keep the reliquary in safe and secure places.

## *What to do after the visit of the Relics.*

### **1. LOURDES Water**

If you require more water after the visit of the relics, please order it directly from the Sanctuary of Lourdes by sending an e-mail to [stephanie.shaw@lourdes-france.com](mailto:stephanie.shaw@lourdes-france.com)  
Please ensure that you only order from the Sanctuary as there are many fraudulent websites selling water. Commercial use of Lourdes water is strictly prohibited.

### **2. Thanksgiving**

Often many people will not be able to access the relics. So, it is also important to be able to take pictures of Saint Bernadette to those who are unable to come, to organize a mass of thanksgiving, to report on the pilgrimage in the diocesan and parish news bulletins, on websites, and social media networks. In short, to share the joy of this visit.

### **3. Donations and Mass offerings**

During this visit, it is possible that some of the faithful will want to donate to the Sanctuary or request that masses be celebrated. It is up to the organizer to send these gifts and intentions, in full and without charge, to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes.

This can be done by bank transfer to the Sanctuary of Our lady of Lourdes.:  
IBAN : FR76 3000 3020 5100 0372 6275 109  
BIC : SOGEFRIPP

Please, name the bank transfer as following: “RELICS OF ST BERNADETTE”

### **4. Communication after the visit of the Relics**

Photos, videos, etc. taken during the visit (layout of the venues and the reliquary when it is exposed to the veneration of the faithful, masses, processions, vigils ...) should be sent to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes so that we can record the visit, celebrate it on our website, and share it with as many people as possible.

Please send them to [Pauline.broque@lourdes-france.com](mailto:Pauline.broque@lourdes-france.com)

### **5. Feedback concerning the visit of the relics**

The Sanctuary of Lourdes would like to hear about the visit of the relics to your diocese. We would be grateful for a report that shares the highlights of the visit and some of the graces received during the visit. We would also like to know how we can be of assistance to you in further developing the grace of Lourdes in your diocese and strengthening the ties that bind us.

Please send it to [Pauline.broque@lourdes-france.com](mailto:Pauline.broque@lourdes-france.com)

### **6. Continue to live and receive the grace of Our Lady of Lourdes in your diocese**

Here are a few suggestions to keep alive - and possibly extend - the spiritual fruits of the visit of the relics to your parish/diocese:

- Organize a Marian procession each 11 of February on the Feast Day of Our Lady of Lourdes and World Day of the Sick
- Come to Lourdes on a pilgrimage
- Create a Hospitality Our Lady of Lourdes in your diocese to serves the sick, poor, or suffering
- Request a Lourdes Virtual Pilgrimage Experience™ in your diocese, parish, school, or other facility

## ***Contacts at the Sanctuary of Lourdes (France)***

Father Jean-Marcel Rossini  
“Chaplain” of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes  
Coordinator of the pilgrimage of the Relics of Saint Bernadette  
[jean-marcel.rossini@lourdes-france.com](mailto:jean-marcel.rossini@lourdes-france.com)  
+33 (0) 644 014 841

Madam Pauline Broqué  
Development officer  
[pauline.broque@lourdes-france.com](mailto:pauline.broque@lourdes-france.com)  
+33 (0) 683 636 511

## ***Contact in the United State of America***

In the USA, 3 main organisations lead the pilgrimage to Lourdes.  
These organisations remain available to help you in any way you might need to organise the visit of the relics, promote the spiritual message of Our Lady of Lourdes in your diocese, support the creation of a diocesan hospitality, organise a pilgrimage to Lourdes.

### **Our Lady of Lourdes Hospitality North American Volunteers**

Erika Vincent  
[erika@lourdesvolunteers.org](mailto:erika@lourdesvolunteers.org)  
USA 315-476-0026

### **The Hospitality of Miami**

Msgr Kenneth Schwanger  
[msgr@ololourdes.org](mailto:msgr@ololourdes.org)  
USA 305-968-9094

### **The Sovereign Order of Malta**

Wayne Ruth, KM, Sovereign Order of Malta, federal Association  
[wtruth@masonrysolutions.com](mailto:wtruth@masonrysolutions.com)  
USA 410-299-4227

For Malta-related items, Wayne will coordinate with the Western and American Associations.